Variation selectors for Emoji skin tone

Please first read: L2/14-172  Proposed enhancements for emoji characters: background

See also the working draft Unicode Emoji at unicode.org/reports/tr51/

Based on the background in the background document, this document lists which characters can be used with variation selectors for skin tone.

The base characters are chosen from the table Draft Emoji Data (Full) using the following criteria:

- The annotations include “human”
- The emoji style is default or selectable (with variation selector)
- One or more of the presentations includes visible skin, with at least one of the vendors

The following variation selections pick the emoji presentation where available, but then also indicate the desired skin tone. Where that tone is not available, the character should be given an emoji presentation with a “neutral” skin tone (such as orange).

All of the characters below can take the following variation selectors:

- FE0D dark skin tone
- FE0C medium skin tone
- FE0B light skin tone

These can be applied to most of the people and body part emoji, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1F446 FE0D</td>
<td>white up pointing backhand index with dark skin tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1F446 FE0C</td>
<td>white up pointing backhand index with medium skin tone TBD: fix tone to be ~½ way between</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skin tone variants, in particular, may be handled by certain font technologies with minimal impact to the overall font size.

The emoji depicting multiple people can take additional variation selectors:

- FE09 light-medium tone for person on left*, medium-dark tone for person on right*
- FE0A medium-dark tone for person on left*, light-medium tone for person on right*
* If there are more than 2 people, then only adults are affected. If there are gender differences among the affect people, then “left” above refers to the male, and “right” to the female.

The light-medium tone would be about ⅓ of the way from the light to dark tones, and the medium-dark would be about ⅔ of the way.

Note: the lists below use two different formats. This does not affect the contents.

Contents

People

Body

Faces

Multiple People

Gender

People

U+1F466 BOY
U+1F467 GIRL
U+1F468 MAN
U+1F469 WOMAN
U+1F46E POLICE OFFICER
U+1F471 PERSON WITH BLOND HAIR
U+1F472  MAN WITH GUA PI MAO
U+1F473  MAN WITH TURBAN
U+1F474  OLDER MAN
U+1F475  OLDER WOMAN
U+1F476  BABY
U+1F477  CONSTRUCTION WORKER
U+1F478  PRINCESS
U+1F481  INFORMATION DESK PERSON
U+1F482  GUARDSMAN
U+1F46F  WOMAN WITH BUNNY EARS
U+1F486  FACE MASSAGE
U+1F487  HAIRCUT
U+1F470  BRIDE WITH VEIL
U+1F64D  PERSON FROWNING
U+1F64E  PERSON WITH POUTING FACE
U+1F645  FACE WITH NO GOOD GESTURE
U+1F646  FACE WITH OK GESTURE
U+1F647  PERSON BOWING DEEPLY
U+1F64B  HAPPY PERSON RAISING ONE HAND
U+1F64C  PERSON RAISING BOTH HANDS IN CELEBRATION
U+1F64F  PERSON WITH FOLDED HANDS
U+1F6B6  PEDESTRIAN
U+1F3C3  RUNNER
U+1F483  DANCER

U+1F572  # V7.0 ( ) no piracy
The following are subject to decision in UTR 51 as to whether they should be only depicted as “pure” symbols (eg, outline form) or not:

U+1F6AE  # V6.0 ( ) put litter in its place symbol
U+1F6B7  # V6.0 ( ) no pedestrians
U+1F6B8  # V6.0 ( ) children crossing
U+267F  # V4.1 ( ) wheelchair symbol
U+1F6B9  # V6.0 ( ) mens symbol
U+1F6BA  # V6.0 ( ) womens symbol
U+1F6BB  # V6.0 ( ) restroom
U+1F6BC  # V6.0 ( ) baby symbol

Body
U+1F448  WHITE LEFT POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F59A  SIDEWAYS BLACK LEFT POINTING INDEX
U+1F598  SIDEWAYS WHITE LEFT POINTING INDEX
U+1F59C  BLACK LEFT POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F449  WHITE RIGHT POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F59D  BLACK RIGHT POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F59B  SIDEWAYS BLACK RIGHT POINTING INDEX
U+1F599  SIDEWAYS WHITE RIGHT POINTING INDEX
U+261D  WHITE UP POINTING INDEX
U+1F5A2  BLACK UP POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F59E  SIDEWAYS WHITE UP POINTING INDEX
U+1F5A0  SIDEWAYS BLACK UP POINTING INDEX
U+1F446  WHITE UP POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F595  REVERSED HAND WITH MIDDLE FINGER EXTENDED
U+1F597  WHITE DOWN POINTING LEFT HAND INDEX
U+1F5A3  BLACK DOWN POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+1F59F  SIDEWAYS WHITE DOWN POINTING INDEX
U+1F5A1  SIDEWAYS BLACK DOWN POINTING INDEX
U+1F447  WHITE DOWN POINTING BACKHAND INDEX
U+270C  VICTORY HAND
U+1F94  REVERSED VICTORY HAND
U+1F96  RAISED HAND WITH PART BETWEEN MIDDLE AND RING FINGERS
U+270A  RAISED FIST
U+270B  RAISED HAND
U+1F44A  FISTED HAND SIGN
U+1F44B  WAVING HAND SIGN
U+1F44C  OK HAND SIGN
U+1F44D  THUMBS UP SIGN
U+1F592  REVERSED THUMBS UP SIGN
U+1F44E  THUMBS DOWN SIGN
U+1F593  REVERSED THUMBS DOWN SIGN
U+1F44F  CLAPPING HANDS SIGN
U+1F450  OPEN HANDS SIGN
U+1F58E  LEFT WRITING HAND
U+1F58F  TURNED OK HAND SIGN
U+1F590  RAISED HAND WITH FINGERS SPLAYED
U+1F591  REVERSED RAISED HAND WITH FINGERS SPLAYED
U+1F485  NAIL POLISH
U+1F4AA  FLEXED BICEPS
U+1F442  EAR
U+1F443  NOSE

U+261A  # V1.1 (⟵) black left pointing index
U+261C  # V1.1 (⟷) white left pointing index
U+261B  # V1.1 (⟶) black right pointing index
U+261E  # V1.1 (☞) white right pointing index
The following would only show a difference with the VS if part of the face around the main part of the character is depicted:

U+1F445 # V6.0 ( ) tongue
U+1F48B # V6.0 ( ) kiss mark
U+1F444 # V6.0 ( ) mouth
U+1F5E2 # V7.0 ( ) lips

Note: the following is annotated with human, but shouldn’t be subject to the VS:

U+1F463 # V6.0 ( ) footprints

Faces

U+263A # V1.1 (☺) white smiling face
U+2639 # V1.1 (☹) white frowning face
U+263B # V1.1 (☻) black smiling face
U+1F641 # V7.0 ( ) slightly frowning face
U+1F642 # V7.0 ( ) slightly smiling face
U+1F600 # V6.1 ( ) grinning face
U+1F601 # V6.0 ( ) grinning face with smiling eyes
U+1F602 # V6.0 ( ) face with tears of joy
U+1F603 # V6.0 ( ) smiling face with open mouth
U+1F604 # V6.0 ( ) smiling face with open mouth and smiling eyes
U+1F605 # V6.0 ( ) smiling face with open mouth and cold sweat
U+1F606 # V6.0 ( ) smiling face with open mouth and tightly-closed eyes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unicode</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U+1F609</td>
<td>winking face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60A</td>
<td>smiling face with smiling eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60B</td>
<td>face savouring delicious food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60C</td>
<td>relieved face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60D</td>
<td>smiling face with heart-shaped eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60E</td>
<td>smiling face with sunglasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F60F</td>
<td>smirking face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F610</td>
<td>neutral face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F611</td>
<td>expressionless face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F612</td>
<td>unamused face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F613</td>
<td>face with cold sweat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F614</td>
<td>pensive face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F615</td>
<td>confused face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F616</td>
<td>confounded face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F617</td>
<td>kissing face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F618</td>
<td>face throwing a kiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F619</td>
<td>kissing face with smiling eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61A</td>
<td>kissing face with closed eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61B</td>
<td>face with stuck-out tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61C</td>
<td>face with stuck-out tongue and winking eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61D</td>
<td>face with stuck-out tongue and tightly-closed eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61E</td>
<td>disappointed face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F61F</td>
<td>worried face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F620</td>
<td>angry face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F621</td>
<td>pouting face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+1F622</td>
<td>crying face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
 persevering face
 face with look of triumph
 disappointed but relieved face
 frowning face with open mouth
 anguished face
 fearful face
 weary face
 sleepy face
 tired face
 grimacing face
 loudly crying face
 face with open mouth
 hushed face
 face with open mouth and cold sweat
 face screaming in fear
 astonished face
 flushed face
 sleeping face
 dizzy face
 face without mouth
 face with medical mask
 smiling face with halo
 baby angel
 smiling face with horns
 imp
 postal mark face
Multiple People

The remaining characters can also take variation selectors FE0A or FE09 which designate one person as having light skin tone and another as having dark skin tone:

U+1F46C  TWO MEN HOLDING HANDS
U+1F46D  TWO WOMEN HOLDING HANDS
U+1F46B  MAN AND WOMAN HOLDING HANDS
U+1F48F  KISS
U+1F491  COUPLE WITH HEART
U+1F46A  FAMILY

Note: This set of variation selectors still does not provide a way to separately specify skin tone for children in the FAMILY.

Gender

Certain emoji have explicit gender, based on the name. All others should be depicted in a gender-neutral way.

The combinatorics prevent us from having depictions like: MAN (with dark skin-tone and white hair), or BICYCLIST (male with dark skin-tone). Achieving that would require something like loosening the Unicode Standard specification for variation sequences to allow multiple variation selectors after a single character. Were we to make such a change, we could have a set of VSs for skin tone, a set for gender, and even a set for hair color, and allow combinations. We also wouldn’t need FE09 and FE0A, because we could use a sequence, applying to respective people in a group.

However, that is not a change we should make without serious consideration of issues such as compatibility and ontology. So we would need to investigate whether this would cause problems for existing implementations, and specify whether the ordering among the VS characters was significant, or not (and in the latter case specify a canonical order—probably just code point order).

It also appears to be the case that people already list a sequence of emoji to indicate a single entity, so it may be enough to just have the existing MAN or WOMAN emoji, and perhaps in the future a “WHITE HAIR” emoji or “BEARD” emoji which would be placed in sequence.